

**Seventeenth meeting and ninth teleconference of the Bureau of the International Conference on Chemicals Management for its fifth session**  
Wednesday, 21 July 2021, from 2 – 4 pm CET

## **REPORT OF THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF THE ICCM5 BUREAU**

### **1) Opening and welcome**

The President of the Fifth International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5) Ms. Gertrud Sahler welcomed all participants to the seventeenth meeting and ninth teleconference of the ICCM5 Bureau. In her welcoming remarks, she noted that the COVID-19 situation is still posing a challenge in many parts of the world and therefore prudence is needed planning for face-to-face meetings. With regard to the Berlin Forum on Chemicals and Sustainability which took place on 7 and 8 July 2021, Ms. Sahler pointed out that it was very valuable as a preparation for ICCM5 and that it was successful in increasing the visibility of chemicals and waste, in raising the ambition level of all stakeholders at a high political level and in communicating the need for urgent, inclusive action. In this context, she noted with appreciation the announcements by Denmark, UK and Germany for their financial commitments to the UNEP Special Programme and thanked all Bureau members who supported the preparations of their Ministers or high-level representatives in the background.

Ms. Sahler then informed the Bureau of the retirement of Ms. Suzanne Leppinen, regional representative for the WEOG region, and welcomed Ms. Victoria Tunstall as the new regional Bureau member for the region.

### **2) Adoption of the agenda**

The President highlighted that the primary focus of this teleconference is to discuss the considerations for IP4 and OEWG4, and regional meetings (agenda item 4); to present the revised Programme of Work and Budget 2021 – 2023 (agenda item 5a); to present the updated SAICM 2017 – 2019 Progress Report (agenda item 5b); and to present preliminary results of the online survey on the Virtual Working Groups held between October 2020 – February 2021 (agenda item 5c).

She further informed the Bureau members that she will present a new project addressing the synergies of climate change and chemicals management under agenda item 8 (AOB) and asked the Bureau if they have any other topics to propose for this agenda item. Without any further requests from the Bureau, the agenda was adopted.

### **3) Adoption of sixteenth meeting report of the ICCM5 Bureau, held on 19 May 2021**

The Bureau members adopted the report of the sixteenth meeting of the ICCM5 Bureau, held on 19 May 2021, without additional comments.

### **4) Considerations for the Fourth meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 (IP4) and a Fourth Open-ended Working Group (OEWG4), and regional meetings**

As an introduction to this agenda item, the ICCM5 President Ms. Sahler explained that the Bureau at its 15th meeting requested the SAICM Secretariat to provide a rationale on the proposal to convene an additional OEWG meeting prior to ICCM5 (SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.9/2). Additionally, the UNEP legal officer

provided clarification on whether OEWG4 could replace IP4 as presented in SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.9/3. Based on the information presented in these documents, the President asked the Bureau to consider whether they would be in favor of convening both IP4 and OEWG4 when face-to-face meetings are feasible, including the timelines between each meeting, and ICCM5; or whether they are in favor of continuing the work of the Intersessional Process by correspondence and/or by electronic means. This process would be informed by the findings of the survey, amongst other considerations. She opened the floor for comments on the considerations for IP4 and OEWG4.

A number of Bureau members pointed out that they were not in favor of convening an additional OEWG *instead of* IP4, noting that OEWG3 had decided to convene an IP4. Furthermore, several Bureau members highlighted the budgetary implications for convening an additional OEWG, as well as further delays in convening ICCM5. The Bureau requested further information on a possible timeline up to ICCM5 if both meetings are held.

Ms. Monika G MacDevette (IOMC) noted that the IOMC would favour an OEWG4 meeting over IP4 as an OEWG4 would be more inclusive and foster broad participation.

Ms. Judith Torres (IP Co-chair) proposed that IP4 should be held first and assess after the meeting if an OEWG4 is still be needed. She also brought the option to the table to convene OEWG4 after ICCM5 to address unsolved issues.

Ms. Victoria Tunstall (WEOG) highlighted that it would be important for her region to know what the desired outcome for each meeting would be. She further pointed out that virtual regional meetings are necessary to address the issue of inclusiveness in the Intersessional Process.

Mr. Tadesse Amera (Public Interest Organizations) and Ms. Angela Libarona (GRULAC) both pointed out that the mandates of IP meetings and the mandate of OEWG meetings differ substantially and that in comparison to an IP4, an OEWG4 can take decisions in advance of ICCM5. Both the Bureau members' constituencies would opt for convening an additional OEWG4 after IP4 to prepare the relevant decisions for ICCM5.

Ms. Servet Goren (Industry) noted that Industry would not have a strong position on either option. Instead, it would be important to keep momentum, make progress and remain realistic. She supported the idea to consider the option of holding an OEWG meeting after IP4 and ICCM5 if considerable gaps remain open.

Mr. Rory O'Neill (Labour NGOs) referred to what Mr. Amera raised concerning the importance to take decisions before ICCM5 and asked for clarification from the Secretariat whether an OEWG4 would structurally be needed. To clarify, Ms. Nalini Sharma (SAICM Secretariat) explained that an additional OEWG4 could table decisions to alleviate issues which are currently outstanding prior to ICCM5, especially given the time that has passed since IP3 and many brackets remain in the text. However, an OEWG4 is not needed and ICCM5 could also address all remaining issues.

Having considered all the interventions from the Bureau, the ICCM5 President Ms. Sahler concluded that the discussion cannot be finalized at this meeting. She proposed to keep the decision to have IP4 as decided by OEWG3 and take a decision following IP4 if an additional OEWG4 is needed or helpful for a successful outcome of ICCM5. This would mean that the Programme of Work should include a placeholder for OEWG4 prior to ICCM5 in the case of a decision in favour of OEWG4. All Bureau members agreed. The President asked the Secretariat to revise the Programme of Work and Budget 2021-2023 accordingly and circulate it among the Bureau members.

## **5) Update on SAICM implementation to date**

### **(c) Preliminary results of the online survey on the Virtual Working Groups held between October 2020 and February 2021**

Under this agenda item, the President decided to first consider the preliminary results of the online survey on the Virtual Working Group (VWG) process, before addressing the other two subjects under agenda item 5. She hence gave the floor to the Mr. José de Mesa (SAICM Secretariat) to present the preliminary results.

Mr. de Mesa stated that the survey on the Virtual Working Groups held between October 2020 – February 2021 was launched on 16 June 2021 in the 6 UN languages. The Secretariat undertook targeted outreach efforts to ensure that the survey reached a wide range of stakeholders, including those stakeholders that did not participate in the virtual work. By the deadline of 16 July 2021, 116 responses were received. He noted that the Secretariat will only present the statistics, as the detailed analysis has not yet been conducted. The presentation included selected figures that show that the different UN regions were well represented in the responses. The majority of respondents were from the government sector, followed by Civil Society. 22 percent of the respondents did not participate in the VWGs. 44 percent of those who participated provided comments in writing. The VWG participants indicated that the platform worked well for them and that the information and materials uploaded on the website was useful. However, around 70 percent of the participants said that the schedule of all four VWGs was ‘not really’ manageable for them. 88 percent considered regional dialogues useful in the future.] The final results and analysis will be circulated to the Bureau by 30 July 2021. The findings of the assessment will inform the design of the future work for the intersessional process.

Thereafter, Ms. Sahler invited the SAICM Secretariat to inform the Bureau members on the concept note for the virtual regional meetings (SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.9/4) which the Secretariat developed jointly with the Co-chairs of the Intersessional Process. Mr. de Mesa referred to the primary survey results, which clearly showed that SAICM stakeholders consider regional dialogues helpful for their region. He noted that the proposal includes a 10-minute video message by the Co-facilitators of the VWGs on the outcomes of their respective VWG, which will be uploaded on the SAICM website prior to the regional meetings. The meetings be held for two hours and be structured in two parts: the first part, to inform the regions on the results of the survey, a presentation by the IP Co-chairs on a way forward in the Intersessional Process, and to give regions the opportunity to provide feedback; and a second part to give regions the opportunity to discuss their perspectives amongst themselves in a closed meeting.

Ms. Victoria Tunstall (WEOG) mentioned that the proposal to present a path forward to the regional meetings caused concern because the final reports and outcomes of the VWGs have not yet been discussed. It would therefore be too early to present a path forward at the regional level.

Ms. Sahler clarified that the purpose of the regional meetings would be to respond to the requests from the regions to discuss the results of the VWGs and consider the results of the online survey with interpretation. The Bureau would then decide how to move forward with the intersessional process.

Both the IP Co-chair Ms. Judith Torres and Ms. Angela Libarona (GRULAC) underlined the importance of discussing the outcomes of the VWGs. In addition, Ms. Libarona proposed that the IP Co-chairs draft a document on the proposed way forward for the Intersessional Process and circulate it prior to the regional meetings. Ms. Sahler reinforced this request and Ms. Torres confirmed that they will draft such a document. Consideration should also be given to briefings for industry and academia stakeholders as the response rate from these stakeholder groups was low.

As a result of the deliberations, the President asked the SAICM Secretariat to go ahead with the planning and organization of the virtual regional meetings to take place on 7 and 8 September and closed the agenda item.

#### **(a) Revised Programme of Work and Budget 2021 – 2023, including its related draft decision**

Before opening the floor for comments, Ms. Sahler recalled the process of developing the revised draft Programme of Work and Budget for the period 2021 – 2023, including the commenting period on the first draft between 19 May and 18 June 2021. The revised document (SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.9/5) takes on board the comments received by the deadline. The President reiterated based on the decision taken earlier under agenda item 4 to keep the option of convening an additional OEWG4 open until after IP4 will need to be reflected in the current draft Programme of Work. Consequently, discussion on the draft decision on the Programme of Work and budget for the period 2021-2023 (SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.9/6) will have to be postponed to the next Bureau meeting. The President then opened the floor for comments on both documents.

Ms. Victoria Tunstall (WEOG) asked to revise the text in table 2 on the outcomes of the Virtual Working Groups and keep it more general, as the outcomes have not yet been discussed by the Bureau. Ms. Sahler agreed and the SAICM Secretariat suggested that table 2 be deleted in its entirety and insert a broad reference to the outcomes of the VWGs, including a reference to the consideration of the online survey results and the outcomes of the planned regional meetings in September 2021.

Ms. Judith Torres (IP Co-chair) asked that the paragraph on capacity building and GHS be formulated more broadly and not focus on the GHS Global Partnership only, as there are other actors involved in this area. The SAICM Secretariat confirmed that it would update the paragraph accordingly.

Mr. Szymon Domagalski (CEE) mentioned that a stakeholder from the CCE Region requested that in the draft decision for the Programme of Work and Budget for the period 2021-2023, the paragraphs on GEF and IOMC be deleted and the draft decision focus only on budget matters. This will facilitate the silent procedure. He also mentioned that this is not the CEE Regional position.

The President concluded this agenda item and proposed that both documents are revised and circulated for discussion in the regions, considered at the next Bureau meeting and subsequently circulated through the silent procedure.

#### **(b) SAICM 2017-2019 Progress Report (updated)**

The President Ms. Sahler presented the revised SAICM 2017-2019 Progress Report (SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.9/1) to the Bureau. The document had been presented at its 16<sup>th</sup> ICCM5 Bureau on 19 May 2021 and was circulated for review. Subsequently, the Secretariat received a number of comments of which most have been incorporated into the revised report. Some comments received suggested that the structure of the report be revised, so the Secretariat proposed that a revised structure be used for the next progress report to be presented to ICCM5.

Ms. Tunstall (WEOG) noted that it would be helpful to know which parts of the report have been revised in the updated version. Consequently, the SAICM Secretariat confirmed that it will circulate the track changes version to the Bureau members. The report will then be disseminated among all stakeholders in the second week of August 2021.

#### **6) SAICM Secretariat Budget**

As the SAICM Budget was included in the Programme of Work and Budget 2021-2023 (which was discussed under agenda item 5a) (SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.9/5) and no Bureau member asked for the floor, the President directly moved to the next agenda item.

Ms. Sharma informed the Bureau that Ms. Brenda Koekkoek has taken up a 2-year reassignment to work with UNEP's marine litter team, and a recruitment process is underway to replace Ms. Koekkoek for the 2-year period.

#### **7) Next teleconference of the Bureau**

The President proposed either 29 September or 6 October 2021 as suitable dates for the eighteenth meeting and tenth teleconference of the ICCM5 Bureau. She asked the SAICM Secretariat to circulate a poll to agree on one of the two dates to hold the next meeting.

#### **8) Any Other Business**

Ms. Sahler asked the Bureau members if they would like to raise an additional point under this agenda item. Since no Bureau member raised a point, Ms. Sahler took the floor to present a Euro 2 million project on "climate action programme for the chemicals industry", which was launched last year and implemented by GIZ through the ISC3 with the envisioned outcome to design and implement measures for more climate friendly production and use of chemicals. The two phases would consist of sharing knowledge and best practices (in Argentina, Peru, Morocco, Vietnam and Thailand); and organization of workshops on knowledge

and capacity building to foster implementation of safe production and use of chemicals. She announced that more detailed information on the project will be disseminated through the SAICM Secretariat website.

Finally, the ICCM5 President Ms. Sahler announced that she will retire this month. She thanked all Bureau members and assured the Bureau that Germany would stay committed to host ICCM5. She then gave the floor to her successor Ms. Anita Breyer to introduce herself.

Ms. Anita Breyer expressed that she is very honoured to be nominated by Germany and Ms. Sahler to take over this important role and highlighted her willingness and dedication to make ICCM5 a success. Ms. Breyer is an Economist by training and joined the German Ministry for the Environment in 1990. During these years, she worked in a number of different areas, including prior experience with chemical safety during the INC4 meeting of the Stockholm Convention in Bonn in 1999.

All Bureau members as well as the SAICM Secretariat extended their thanks and best wishes to Ms. Sahler for her support and her dedicated, inclusive and inspiring leadership style over the last years. The Bureau further extended a warm welcome to Ms. Breyer and looked forward to good and fruitful collaboration.

#### **9) Closure of the meeting**

Ms. Sahler thanked the SAICM Secretariat for organizing the seventeenth meeting and ninth teleconference of the ICCM5 Bureau. She thanked all Bureau members for their warm words and wished them all the best. The meeting closed at 3:50 pm CET.

## Annex

### Participants

**Bureau Members:** Ms. Gertrud Sahler (Germany, ICCM5 Bureau Member Western Europe and Others Group), Mr. Szymon Domagalski (Poland, ICCM5 Bureau Member Central and Eastern Europe).

**Regional Focal Points:** Ms. Victoria Tunstall (Canada representing Western Europe and Others), Mr. Vladimir Lenev (Russian Federation representing Central and Eastern Europe), and Ms. María del Pilar Ángela Teves Libarona (Argentina representing Latin America and the Caribbean).

**Representatives of non-governmental participants and the IOMC:** Mr. Tadesse Amara (Public Interest Organisations), Mr. Rory O'Neill (Labour NGOs) Ms. Servet Goren (Industry), and Ms. Monika G. MacDevette (IOMC).

**SAICM Secretariat:** Ms. Nalini Sharma (SAICM Coordinator), Mr. José de Mesa, Mr. Eduardo Caldera Petit, Mr. Oleksandr Nazarenko, Mr. Ricardo Dunn, and Ms. Marijana Todorovic.

**Observers:** Ms. Anita Breyer (Germany, incoming ICCM5 President) Ms. Judith Torres (Co-chair of the Intersessional Process), and Mr. Stadler Trengove (Principal Legal Officer, Law Division, UNEP).

**Regrets:** Mr. David Kapindula (Zambia, ICCM5 Bureau Member Africa), Mr. Dharmendra Kumar Gupta (India, ICCM5 Bureau member Asia Pacific Region), Ms. Valentina Sierra (Uruguay, ICCM5 Bureau Member Latin America and the Caribbean). Mr. Mohsen Naziri Asl (Iran representing Asia-Pacific), Mr. Kouame Georges Kouadio (Cote D'Ivoire representing Africa), and Susan Wilburn (Health)